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RHAPSODY

ON

VIRTUE and PLEASURE.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

JAMES REYNOLDS Esq;

Late Lord Chief Baron of the EXCHEQUER.

By Mr. *COOKE.*

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ON

VIRTUE and PLEASURE.

WHEN Virtue from the buſy World retires,
After a glorious Race, the Muſe admires;
Her ev'ry Step with curious Eyes ſhe views,
And with immortal Praiſe the Tract purſues.
If ſhe retreats poetic Shades among,
Where VIRGIL was inſpir'd, and HORACE ſung,
(The Land of Wit and Wiſdom Ages paſs'd,)
Where TULLY wrote, and SHAFTESB'RY breath'd his laſt,
Or if to *Aſiatic* Plains ſhe flys,
To the rich Climes where eaſtern Odours riſe,

Let

Let her to *Kilda*'s * northern Iſland go,
Crown'd, like *Olympus*, with eternal Snow,
High on whatever Hill ſhe makes her Bed,
Or in whatever Vale ſhe hides her Head,
Let her beneath whatever Sky repair,
The Muſe ſhall follow, and attend her there.

REYNOLDS, for thee, whom *Suffolk* Fields invite
To letter'd Eaſe, and Solitude's Delight,
For thee I meditate the grateful Lay,
To Juſtice due, what Juſtice bids me pay.

LET the gay Youth indulge his am'rous Smart,
And languiſh to ſubdue the Virgin Heart,
Rifle the ſweeteſt Flow'rs, in Beauty's Pride,
For which their thouſands ſigh'd, and hundreds dy'd,

Thro

---

* *St. Kilda* is the moſt weſtern of the north-weſt Iſles of *Scotland:* the Deſcription which is given of it has ſomething extraordinary and poetical in it. This Iſland is fenced all round with ſteep Rocks, excepting a Bay that is ſouth-eaſt, which is not a Harbour fit to receive a Ship; therefore it is almoſt impoſſible to land but in a Calm, and then it muſt be by climbing. The Soil is not unfruitful, and there is great Plenty of Fiſh and Fowl. The few Inhabitants, as they are by Nature ſeparated from the World, and conſequently know Nothing of the Arts of Luxury and Gain, are an innocent People. They have no Money among them, but deal in Exchange of Commoditys. Here is an Epitomy of the World as painted by the Poets in its State of Infancy and Innocence!

Thro Life's ſhort Vigour let the Lover live
Poſſeſs'd of ev'ry Joy that Love can give.
Thro wild Ambition's Field let others flame,
Whoſe Love is Glory, and whoſe Paſſion Fame:
Pour on relentleſs, like a rapid Flood,
And reap the Harveſt which was ſow'd in Blood.
Harneſs the Steeds to the triumphant Car,
Drag at the Wheels the earthly Gods of War:
The Conqu'ror's Brow with crimſon'd Laurel crown,
By Slaughter planted, and miſcall'd Renown.
How falſe the Joys which from theſe Fountains riſe!
A pallid Glory to the good and wiſe!
How true the Joys which ſpring from virtuous Deeds,
Where breaks no tender Heart, nor Honour bleeds!
A greatly virtuous Act unſully'd ſhines,
The Glory brightens, and the Joy refines.

Not youthful *Ammon* in his Blaze of Day,
When Virgins ſought, and Monarchs own'd, his Sway,

Knew Half the Bliſs by *Socrates* poſſeſs'd,
That takes her Dwelling in the virtuous Breaſt.
Say what is Virtue, crys the ſceptic Sage;
This Virtue is, in ev'ry Land and Age,
With Pleaſure to relieve the Wretch from Pain,
To cloath the naked, and to count it Gain;
When to the hungry we extend our Food,
Our Appetite's indulg'd in doing Good.
When Beauty charms us with a luring Eye,
And throws her Darts at all Beholders nigh,
When in our Pow'r we ſee the Maid, or Wife,
Upon whoſe Truth, on whoſe unblemiſh'd Life,
Depends a Parent's, or a Husband's, Bliſs,
'Tis Virtue then to ſhun the glowing Kiſs;
This Virtue is, but ſuch as few can reach:
Some *Men of God* * are gloating while they preach.

WHAT never-fading Laurels *Scipio* gains!
A Conqueſt greater than a thouſand *Spains!*
The mighty Man, all other Men above,
Amidſt his Triumphs drags the Chains of Love.

A Captive

* The Prieſthood is called *Clergy* from the *Greek* Word κληρος, *Lot*, or *Portion*, the Prieſts, and all the ſeveral Orders of the Clergy, being, as themſelves ſay, God's *Portion*.

A Captive heav'nly fair, in whom was ſeen
All that was ever feign'd of Beauty's Queen,
O'er the great Leader reigns without Controul,
Is ever in his Eye, and fills his Soul:
And what the dreadful Warrior can reſtrain?
Why rages ſtill the Fire thro ev'ry Vein?
With unaffected Charms, her flowing Hair,
And what is decent of her Boſom bare,
The Nymph divine before the Victor ſtands,
And no ſuperior Pow'r to hold his Hands:
But, lo! he turns, and views a princely Form,
Sunk and depreſs'd, like Flow'rs beneath a Storm,
His Viſage pale, defac'd with many a Scar,
Which Love had wrought, and the rough Hand of War;
Yet Majeſty ſhin'd thro Misfortune's Shroud,
As ſhines the Sun behind a wint'ry Cloud.
" See," crys th'illuſtrious Youth, " great *Roman*, ſee
" The Fate of Love, the Fate of War, in me:
" I, that 'e'rewhile in royal State could ride
" Thro Ranks of Subjects and Dominions wide,
" Am now in Chains your wretched Captive led,
" To ſee my Bride perhaps aſcend your Bed."

He

He paus'd awhile, to wipe the weeping Eye,
And give a Paſſage to the riſing Sigh:
Then crys the Youth, " if princely Cares can move,
" And if your Heart has ever bled for Love,
" Plunder my Houſes, and my Kingdom ſeize,
" Diſpoſe of all as ſhall the Victor pleaſe;
" But give me back what I eſteem divine,
" What by our Vows and mutual Love is mine,
" My ever-lov'd, as yet my Virgin, Bride,
" That ſtands dejected by my Conqu'ror's Side."

THE gallant Chief, who loves beyond all Bounds,
Feels from the Prince's Words a thouſand Wounds;
A fiercer War now rages in his Breaſt
Than when in Fields of Fight by Legions preſs'd:
The little winged God is loth to part
With his Dominion o'er ſo great a Heart:
He ſtrives to gain a Conqueſt by Surpriſe,
And plays his Light'ning from her radiant Eyes:
The Sight of him whom dead ſhe thought before,
Whom her Fears told her ſhe ſhould ſee no more,

Diſarms

Diſarms the Foe of Beauty fell Deſpair,
Bids the Cheek bloom, and fairer makes the Fair.
Now to the Conqu'ror's Eyes a Proſpect ſhines,
Worth the vaſt Purchaſe of the Di'mond Mines,
The Bed of Love, luxuriant of Delights,
Where Youth and Beauty join the ſecret Rites!
But Virtue, always at our Hero's Side,
With Wiſdom comes, her ever-faithful Guide:
In their true Light they ſhew the Joys of Love,
When gain'd by Virtue, they're all Price above;
Rais'd on another's Woe, acquir'd by Vice,
And are not mutual, they're below all Price.
The *Roman* acts the greatly glorious Part;
He tugs the Arrow from his bleeding Heart,
With his own Hands unbinds the Prince's Chains,
And bids him think no more of former Pains:
" Your conquer'd Land," he crys, " and Bride
" poſſeſs,
" And be my Bleſſing that I others bleſs:
" To your fond Arms your Bliſs I thus reſtore:
Then turn'd the Chief, and ne'er beheld her more.
Thus *Scipio* acted, by no *Bible* taught,
But *Nature's Book*, which God himſelf has wrote.

YE Sons of Virtue here your Off'rings bring,
And all ye Sons of Verſe who know to Sing;
Pluck all, ye Nymphs, the Evergreens which bloom;
With ev'ry fragrant Herb adorn his Tomb;
With Laurels crown the Buſt, crown it with Bays,
And ſing the Song of everlaſting Praiſe.

FORGET not in the Verſe the noble Mind,
That cheriſh'd Worth where-e'er he Worth could find;
Who Fate alike, and *Cæſar*'s Frowns, defy'd,
When for Redreſs to him th'unhappy cry'd;
Who to the wrong'd open'd his friendly Gate,
And ſuccour'd all the greatly injur'd Great;
Before whoſe Eyes Folly could never ſtand;
Nor dar'd Oppreſſion to uplift her Hand:
The Love of all, thro Life, was his Reward,
And Virtue, in the worſt of Times, his Guard.
For him their Vows to *Jove* the People ſend,
And *Cæſar* wanted *Atticus* his Friend.

YE

Ye Princes by deſtructive Paſſions led,
Who mount without a Bluſh th'adult'rous Bed,
Who hear your Subjects all around complain
Of Wrongs, repeated Wrongs, on Land and Main,
While all your Councels are yourſelves to pleaſe,
And while ye batten in inglorious Eaſe,
'Tis Virtue only can your Crowns adorn!
O! learn to merit that to which ye're born!
Think of th'illuſtrious dead, whoſe ev'ry Name
Is borne triumphant on the Wings of Fame:
In ev'ry Corner of the Earth they're known,
And all Eternity to come's their own.
And, O! ye Sons who next to Empire ſtand,
Heirs to Dominion over Sea and Land,
Waſte not the Hours of Youth in ſhameful Jars,
Wage with a Father no domeſtic Wars;
Let it be never ſay'd ye go to School
To the pert Coxcomb, and delib'rate Fool:
Seek not the Praiſe of ſuch who gain no Praiſe;
Like *Nero* dance, nor fiddle out, your Days:
Attend the friendly Voice! 'tis Glory calls
To ſhine in Council, and to ſcale the Walls:

Shake the rapacious Stateſman off, the Slave
Whom Gold can buy; ſhake off the Fool and
Knave:
Turn o'er the ſacred Volume of the Laws,
By your Forefathers made in Virtue's Cauſe:
See what obnoxious Vices ſtill remain,
Which there's no Law, no Bridle, to reſtrain;
Study to make the Nation's Freedom ſure,
The Lives and Propertys of all ſecure:
In doing theſe ye act the princely Part,
And build your Empires in the People's Heart;
No Guards ye then ſhall need, where-e'er ye go;
There is no Danger where there is no Foe.
Theſe are the Virtues of exalted Souls,
Which no mean Care, nor abject Fear, controuls.

THE glorious Opportunity's not giv'n
To all, like *Brutus*, to apply to Heav'n
Before the People, who aſtoniſh'd ſtand,
To drive a *Tarquin* out, and free the Land.
Who in an humble Walk of Life are hurl'd,
With Talents to adorn, and rule the World;

And ſuch there are, deny'd by Stars unkind
The Seaſons to exert the noble Mind,
Should watch Occaſions, and attend the Hours,
And catch the Moments, to indulge their Pow'rs:
Can ye not give a groaning Kingdom Reſt?
Then help the injur'd Wife, or Maid diſtreſs'd:
Firſt with your Friends who want divide your Store,
And open wide your hoſpitable Door:
Is this too much? Is Fate a Niggard here?
And, if you give, is Charity too dear?
Then give Advice, Advice Relief affords:
Pour in the Balm of comfortable Words.
Virtue, that ſeldom ſleeps, herſelf reveals,
Or in the giving Hand, or Heart that feels.

All is not Virtue which Men Virtue call;
Enthuſiaſtic Fools will give up all:
Is to the needy one of theſe a Friend?
He only lends to Heav'n as Uſ'rers lend:
Believ'd he not that God would doubly pay,
He would not give a ſingle Groat away:

He ſees not for himſelf; nor can he ſee;
Nor acts he thus, becauſe it thus ſhould be:
Theſe are the Fools, the Madmen theſe at beſt,
Who render their Religion but a Jeſt.
What? Give up all, give all I have, ye ſay:
To follow what, give all I have away?
'Tis not the Cry of God, nor Nature's Cry:
Is Mankind dearer to myſelf than I?
Deareſt to me the neareſt are in Life;
Dear are my Children, dear my blameleſs Wife.

Of all who proſtitute fair Virtue's Name,
None ridicule her more, or more can ſhame,
Than thoſe, with Fortune's Favours richly clad,
Who are good Men becauſe they are not bad.
This has in Bags two hundred thouſand clear,
And that in Land ten thouſand Pounds a Year:
No Murders they, and they no Thefts, commit,
Nor ſcandaliſe their Neighbours with their Wit;
They neither give, nor ſpend, to wrong their Heirs;
They pay their Debts, believe, and go to Pray'rs:*

To

* *I pay my Debts, believe, and go to Pray'rs.*
Mr. Pope *to Dr.* Arbuthnot.

To the worſt Vice, to Avarice, theſe Slaves,
Theſe negative good Men, are horrid Knaves.
Receive a Tale, theſe Monſters to expoſe,
In homely Verſe, which *Æſop* told in Proſe.

An ugly Mongrel in a Manger lay,
Well fill'd with Oats, the Rack above with Hay,
Where in his Stall confin'd a gallant Steed,
Swift in the Race, and of a gen'rous Breed,
Stood pinch'd with Hunger, yet deny'd to eat
By the curs'd Cur, who could not taſte the Meat.
Such are the Whelps of Fortune who refuſe
To ſpare a Part of what they cannot uſe,
The Sons of Chance, Humanity's Diſgrace:
Out, out, ye Dogs, and give the worthyer Place.

Sweet are the Pleaſures of the bounteous Soul!
He fears no Poyſon lurking in the Bowl:
Where-e'er he goes they wiſh him there to ſtay;
For Diſcontent before him flys away:
All Eyes, which ſee him, ſee him with Delight;
His Virtue is his Guard by Day and Night:

The

The little faithful Miniſters of Sleep,
Whene'er his Eyes are clos'd, their Vigils keep;
They drive all Images of Horror thence,
And none admit ingrateful to the Senſe:
Peaceful his Slumbers are; and, if he dreams,
Thro flow'ry Meads he walks by chryſtal Streams:
O'er Hills he flys, unbounded in his Sight,
And meets with Nothing to obſtruct his Flight;
At Will he views the ev'ry pleaſing Scene,
Gardens and Groves of everlaſting Green:
And when he wakes he wakes to ſweet Content,
The fair Reflection of a Life well-ſpent.

THESE are the Pleaſures, theſe the Joys divine,
Which *Scipio*'s were, and, *Reynolds*, now are thine;
Thine is the Bleſſing which to few belong,
Th'unruffled Mind, and thine th'immortal Song.

The END.